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25 November 1953

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NAVY review(s) completed.DIA and DOS review(s) completed.

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S U M M A R Y

GENERAL

1. Finnish vessel reportedly delivering tanks to Communist China (page 3).

SOVIET UNION

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SOUTHEAST ASIA

3. Viet Minh may intend thrust into Laos (page 4).

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GENERAL

1. Finnish vessel reportedly delivering tanks to Communist China:

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[redacted] while in Gdynia he observed trucks, trailers and tanks being loaded aboard the Finnish vessel Korsholma for China.

Comment: This is the second recent report that Finnish vessels under Satellite charter are delivering arms to Communist China. In October the Herakles was observed unloading six-inch guns from Gdynia in Canton's port of Whampoa. The Korsholma left Suez on 30 October for China.

In most cases the terms of Finnish charters to the bloc exclude transport of arms and ammunition, but some shipowners are willing to overlook the charter limitations in view of the profitable nature of this trade.

SOVIET UNION

2. Comment on 24 November Pravda article:

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[redacted] As a possible forerunner of a new Soviet propaganda emphasis, a 24 November Pravda article points to "normal relations" and "cooperation" with the United States as a major condition for easing international tension. The timing suggests it may be intended to encourage British and French pressure at Bermuda for a more conciliatory attitude regarding the Soviet position on such issues as China's admission to the United Nations.

Consistent with long-standing propaganda, however, the article alleges that Secretary Dulles is not interested in normalizing relations and maintains that "the activity of subverting peaceful states is inseparably bound to the aggressive policy of US ruling circles."

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Continued adherence to this anti-American theme and the omission of a specific proposal which might lead to co-operation suggest that the Pravda article on "normal Soviet-American relations" is simply a new turn of an old wheel.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

3. Viet Minh may intend thrust into Laos:

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The concentrating of Viet Minh regular forces in the Vinh area of northern Annam as a result of current troop movements places the enemy in an excellent position to move southwestward into Laos to threaten

French communications with Saigon along the Mekong River, according to the US army attache in Saigon (see map, p. 5).

One regiment of the 304th Division has already reportedly moved southward from Thanh Hoa to join the 325th Division at Vinh, while a regiment and the headquarters element of the 320th Division have moved from Phu Nho Quan to Thanh Hoa.

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The southward movement of elements of the 304th and 320th Divisions may reflect a reallocation of defensive responsibilities in the Thanh Hoa-Vinh base area, which would become necessary if the 325th Division were committed to offensive action in Laos.

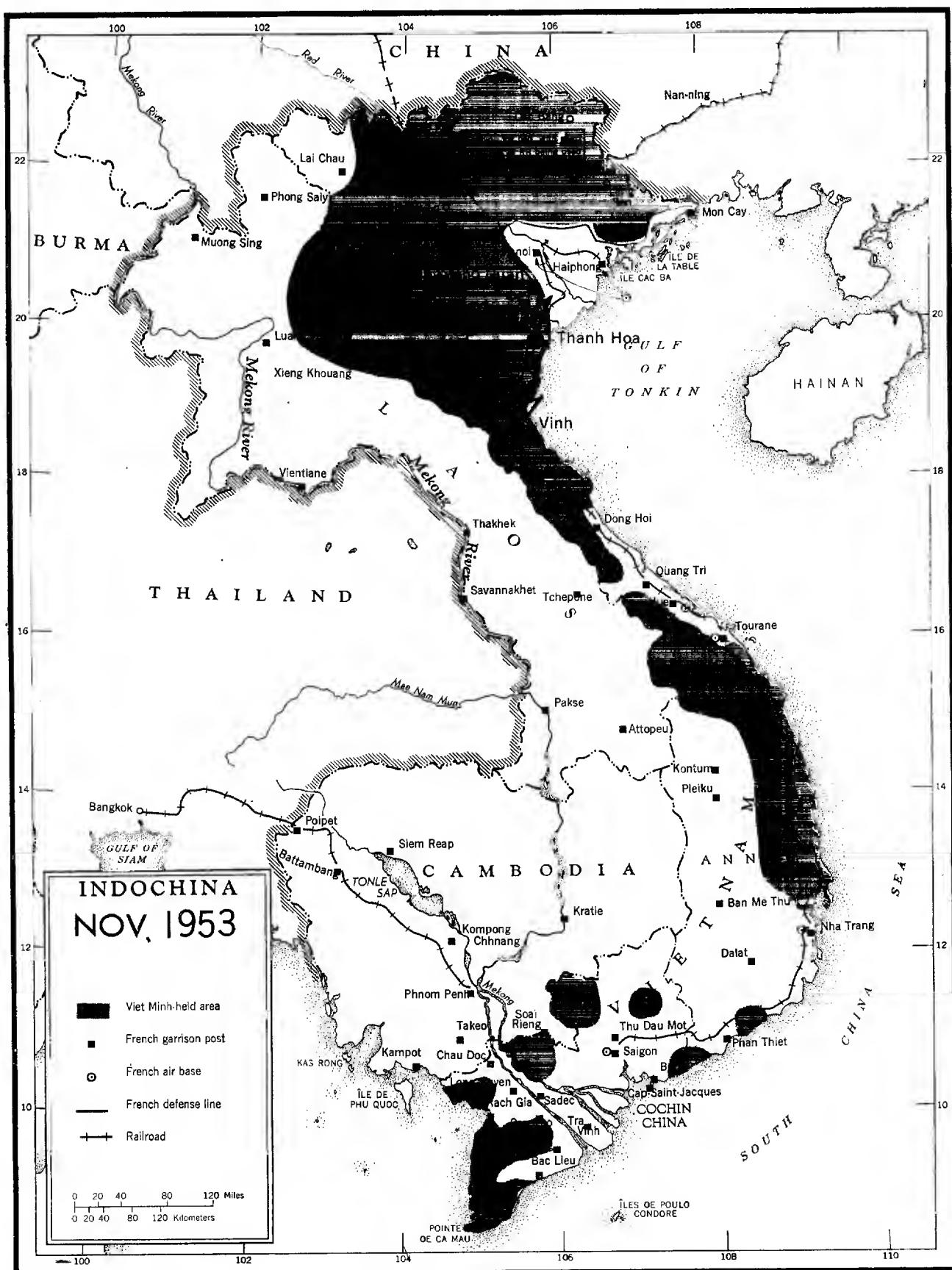
NEAR EAST - AFRICA

4. Compensation reportedly major Libyan consideration in US treaty negotiations:

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The amount of compensation is the principal Libyan consideration in negotiating the base agreement with the United States, [redacted]

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Kekhia also reportedly expressed dissatisfaction with American policy toward the Arab states, as against Israel. He criticized the rigid stand of the United States on jurisdiction provisions in its negotiations with Libya and remarked that "Americans seemed to think that their wealth and power could dictate" to smaller countries.

Comment: There are other indications that the proposed \$2,000,000 annual payment, double what Washington initially offered two years ago, will not now satisfy Libya. Kekhia's criticism of American policy reflects both Egyptian activity in Libya and the influence of the Arab League.

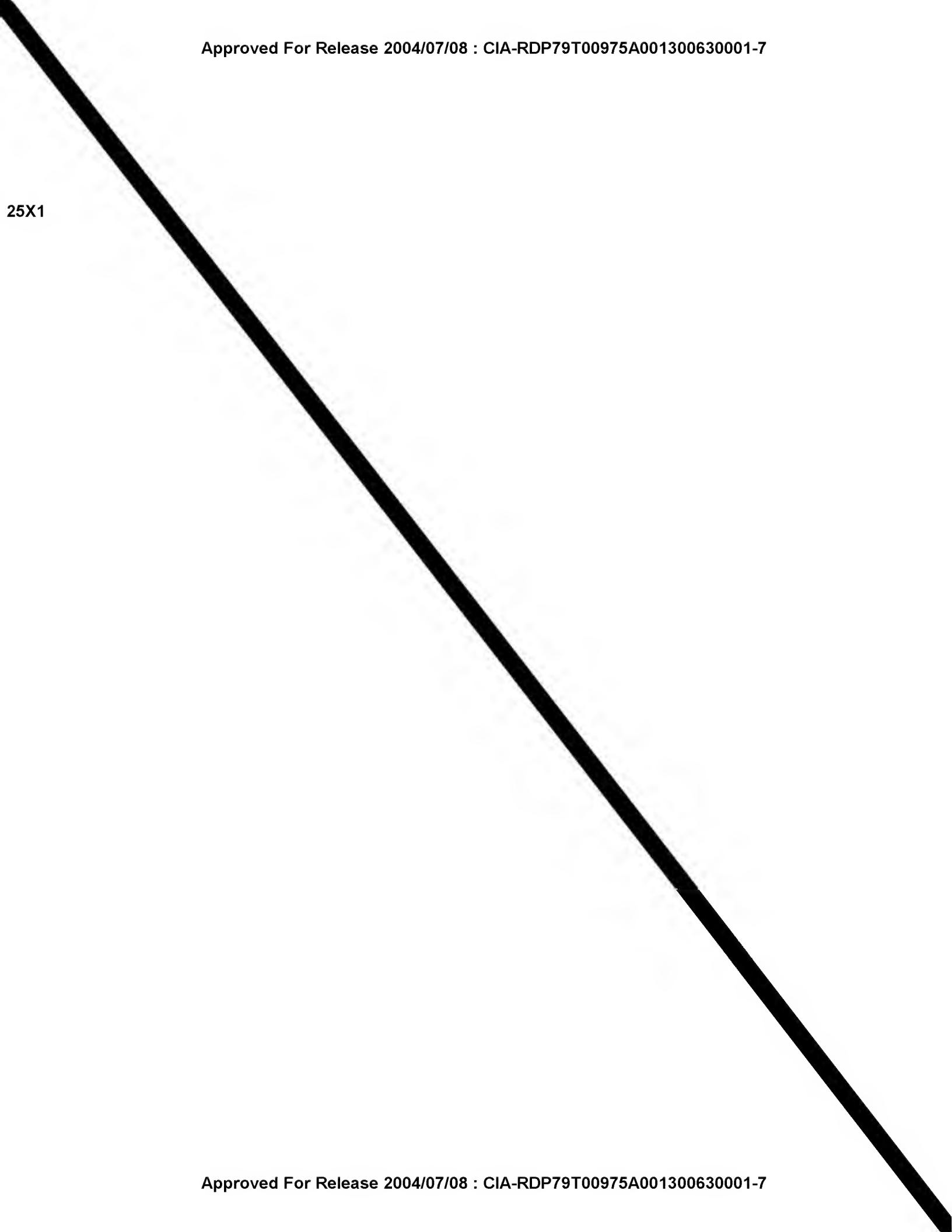
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